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UNITED STATES GRADES FOR SWEET POTATOES

RECOMMENDED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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UNITED STATES GRADES FOR SWEET POTATOES.

Recommended by the United States Department of Agriculture.

The Bureau of Markets of the United States Department of Agriculture recommends the following grades as a standard for the grading and marketing of sweet potatoes.

Tentative grade specifications for this product were proposed by the Bureau of Markets in April, 1918. They were based upon the results of investigations conducted both in the producing areas and in the markets. The use of these tentative grades by many individuals and marketing associations afforded the investigators of the Bureau of Markets an opportunity to study the practical application of the specifications and determine whether any changes were desirable.

U. S. Grade No. 1 gave general satisfaction to both growers and dealers and has not been changed.

In the case of U. S. Fancy No. 1 grade it was found impossible to secure a uniform interpretation of the terminology "bright in color, smooth of surface, and of uniform shape for the variety throughout," and there was little demand for such a grade. For these reasons it has been eliminated.

The U. S. Medium grade, as defined in the tentative specifications, has been omitted, as it was found impractical for use in the sections for which it was intended. Substituted for it is the "U. S. Grade No. 1 Medium." This grade, which has a minimum diameter of one and one-half inches, doubtless will be used only in sections which dig early, and sacrifice yield for early market prices, as in sections of North Carolina.

"U. S. Grade No. 1 Long" is included under U. S. Grade No. 1, to provide for sections where a long type of sweet potato, such as the Triumph, is grown. When this grade is used the lot must contain no sweet potatoes under six inches in length.

"U. S. Grade No. 2" and "U. S. Jumbo Grade" remain as they were in the tentative grades, except that in Grade No. 2 the limitation on the length of the sweet potato has been removed.

"U. S. Grade No. 3" is added to provide for lots which fail to meet the requirements of any of the other grades.

The reader must not get the impression that it is necessary or desirable to sort a given lot of sweet potatoes into all of the grades. U. S. Grade No. 1 Medium and U. S. Grade No. 1 Long are included to care for sections where U. S. Grade No. 1 will not include all of

the stock of the first quality. In most instances it will be desirable only to sort from the number one stock the oversized, undersized, and other inferior sweet potatoes, shipping the number ones to market and disposing of the remainder as stock feed or to the cannery.

The department has no authority to promulgate standard grades for sweet potatoes, yet it is believed that with the voluntary and general support of all interested parties, these standards will assist in stabilizing the marketing of the sweet-potato crop.

UNITED STATES GRADES FOR SWEET POTATOES.

U. S. Grade No. 1.

U. S. Grade No. 1 shall consist of sound sweet potatoes of similar varietal characteristics which are practically free from dirt or other foreign matter, frost injury, decay, bruises, cuts, scars, cracks, and damage caused by heat, disease, insects (including weevils), or mechanical or other means.

The diameter of each sweet potato shall not be less than one and three quarter inches nor more than three and one-half inches, and the length shall not be less than four inches nor more than ten inches, but the length may be less than four inches if the diameter is two and one-quarter inches or more.

In order to allow for variations incident to commercial grading and handling, five per cent, by weight, of any lot may not meet the requirements as to diameter and length, and, in addition, six per cent, by weight, may be below the remaining requirements of the grade.

Any lot in which the diameter is not less than one and one-half inches and which contains a greater percentage by weight of sweet potatoes below one and three-quarters inches than is permitted in U. S. Grade No. 1, but which otherwise meets the requirements of such grade shall be designated as U. S. Grade No. 1 Medium.

Any lot in which the length is not less than six inches nor more than twelve inches and which contains a greater percentage by weight of sweet potatoes above ten inches in length than is permitted in U. S. Grade No. 1, but which otherwise meets the requirements of such grade shall be designated as U. S. Grade No. 1 Long.

U. S. Grade No. 2.

U. S. Grade No. 2 shall consist of sound sweet potatoes of similar varietal characteristics, not meeting the requirements of the foregoing grades, which are free from serious damage caused by dirt or other foreign matter, frost injury, decay, bruises, cuts, scars, cracks, heat, disease, insects, or mechanical or other means, and which are not less than one and one-half inches nor more than three and one-half inches in diameter.

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In order to allow for variations incident to commercial grading and handling, five per cent by weight of any lot may not meet the requirements as to diameter, and, in addition, six per cent by weight may be below the remaining requirements of this grade.

U. S. Jumbo Grade.

U. S. Jumbo Grade shall consist of sound sweet potatoes of similar varietal characteristics, which are free from serious damage caused by dirt or other foreign matter, frost injury, decay, bruises, cuts, scars, cracks, heat, disease, insects, or mechanical or other means, and which are not less than three and one-half inches in diameter.

In order to allow for variations incident to commercial grading and handling, five per cent by weight of any lot may be less than the diameter prescribed, and, in addition, six per cent by weight may be below the remaining requirements of this grade.

U. S. Grade No. 3.

U. S. Grade No. 3 shall consist of sweet potatoes not meeting the requirements of any of the foregoing grades.

Definition of Grade Terms as Used in These Grades.

"Practically free" means that the appearance shall not be injured to an extent readily apparent upon casual examination of the lot, and that any damage from the causes mentioned can be removed without appreciable increase in waste over that which would occur if the sweet potatoes were perfect.

"Diameter" means the greatest dimension at right angles to any portion of a central line running through the sweet potato from stem end to root end.

"Free from serious damage" means that any damage from the causes mentioned can be removed without increase in waste of more than ten per cent by weight over that which would occur if the sweet potatoes were perfect.

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